Information and communication technology training to rural youths

3181. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the need to impart training to rural youths in information and communication technology in order to reach them the benefit of globalization;

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by Government in this regard, and

(c) the details of funds earmarked for this in the Tenth Plan to achieve this end?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SURYAKANTA PATIL): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Rural Development does not have a specific programme for training rural youth in information technology. However, as per information received from the Department of Information Technology, they have taken up an initiative for setting up of Community Information Centres (CICs) in hilly, far flung areas of the country with an objective to bring the benefits of ICT to the people for socio-economic development of these regions and to alleviate the digital divide between urban and non urban areas. These CICs are a citizen interface for IT enabled e-government services and training.

The initiative was as a follow up to the special package announced by PM to the north-eastern states initially involved the setting up of 487 CICs at block level with a projected outlay of Rs 242 crores and an additional 68 CICs at newly created blocks with a projected outlay of Rs. 8.42 crores. It has been extended to Jammu & Kashmir *{135 CICs at block level with projected outlay of Rs. 40.67 crores),* Andaman & Nicobar Islands *(41 CICs in Government schools)* and Lakshadweep islands *{30 CICs in Government Schools)* with a projected outlay of Rs. 21.75 crores.

The Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) is conducting Computer Literacy Programme (CLP) through the CICs in north-eastern states. 6808 candidates have been trained so far through this programme

of IGNOU. DOEACC, a society under DIT is also conducting "Course ' on Computer Concepts (CCC)' through CICs in North Eastern States. 273 CICs have been accredited so far for conducting the 'CCC programme. 1368 candidates were trained for appearing in the DOEACC CCC examination, out of which 983 have passed. In addition, a total of 168,783 persons have been trained on basic computer concepts.

Safe drinking water

3182. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether many villages are not having access to safe and fresh drinking water as on date;

(b) if so, the number of such villages not having safe drinking water and per capita fresh water availability in various States as on date, State-wise, category-wise; and

(c) the details of ground water contamination including the sources of contamination, region-wise as on date, category-wise and district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI A. NARENDRA): (a) and (b) As per the Comprehensive Action Plan 1999 (CAP 99) there were 14,22,664 rural habitation in the country as on 1.4.1999. On the basis of subsequent coverage reported by State Governments/Union Territories, as on 1.10.2005, there are 50299 habitations in the country which have not been covered with the schemes to supply 40 litre per capita per day (Ipcd), or more of safe drinking water. The State-wise details are given in the enclosed Statement-I. (See below). The annual national per capita availability of water (surface and ground), as per population Census of 2001, is 1820 cubic metre. The State-wise per capita availability of water is not maintained.